THE LANDLOCKED TIDE WITCH

A Companion for the Practitioner Far from the Sea

ZJC (2026)

Being a guide to adapting the Salt Archive for those who live in cities, in mountains, on plains, in deserts, anywhere the ocean is a memory, a dream, or a destination rather than a daily presence.

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HOW TO START YOUR PRACTICE

A Brief Orientation for the Landlocked Tide Witch

You have found your way to the *Salt Archive*. Perhaps you live far from the sea, in a city, in the mountains, on the plains, in the desert. Perhaps the nearest salt water is a thousand miles away. Perhaps you have never seen the ocean at all.

And yet something in you recognized the salt. Something in you remembered the sea.

This book is for you.

It is a companion for the practitioner who cannot stand at the tide line, who cannot gather ocean water at the full moon, who cannot feel the sand beneath their feet. It will teach you that the sea is not only a place. It is a presence. It is inside you. The salt is in your blood. The tide is in your breath.

Where to Begin

Read this book slowly. Do not rush. It is not a manual to be memorized. It is a conversation.

Start with Chapter One: The Inner Sea. Before you adapt any ritual, learn to feel the ocean already inside you. Sit quietly. Bring your attention to your lower abdomen. Breathe. Feel the tide of your own breath.

Then move to Chapter Two: The Bowl on the Windowsill. This is your portable sea. A bowl of water. A pinch of salt. A window facing east. That is enough to begin.

Do not try to do everything at once. Start with one practice. The Dawn Hour, adapted for the bowl. Do it for a week. Then add the Dusk Hour. Let the practice grow slowly.

Some Principles to Hold

You are not doing it wrong. The sea does not require your physical presence. It requires your attention.

Your longing is not a weakness. It is a form of attention. It is the shape of your love for the sea.

You are allowed to adapt. The tradition is rooted in the Fujian coast, but it is not bound to any one place. The sea does not demand precision. It demands sincerity.

You are not alone. There are others who carry the sea inland. You are one of them.

A Final Word

You have found your way to this book. That is not an accident. Something in you recognized the salt. Something in you remembered the sea.

The tradition will meet you where you are. It does not ask you to believe anything. It does not ask you to renounce anything. It asks only that you pay attention, to the water, to the moon, to the tides of your own sea.

You are not a failure. You are a beginner. And a beginner is exactly who the tradition is for.

The tide is turning. The hour is now. The rest is salt.

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ABOUT THE *SALT ARCHIVE*

A Brief Note for the Reader

The *Salt Archive* is a collection of texts for the Tide Witch tradition, a practice that draws on the maritime cosmology of the Fujian coast, Daoist ritual, the kinship of salt and sea and the lived experience of women who have found their power at the water's edge.

The tradition is not a religion. It does not require belief. It asks only for awareness, of the tide, of the moon, of the inner sea that moves within every body made of salt water.

The Core Texts

The following texts form the foundation of the tradition and are available on the Internet Archive in English, Spanish, French and Eastern Armenian:

The Chao Wu Lu , the foundational grimoire. It contains the rituals, talismans and teachings that define the Tide Witch path.

The Salt-Water Yi , the Book of Changes of the Sea. A 64-hexagram oracle that speaks in the language of tides, storms and the deep.

The Salt-Kin Codex , the kinship of sharks and Tide Witches. A guide to the Salt-Kin as Manifest Ancestors, teachers and dream-visitors.

The Daoist Ocean Tarot , a 78-card divination system rooted in the imagery of the *Salt Archive*.

These texts are the tradition itself. They are meant to be read, studied, returned to and argued with.

The Practical Companions

The text you are holding is part of the second layer of the *Salt Archive*: the practical companions. These are not scripture. They are teaching texts, pastoral, adaptive and practical.

They include:

The Book of Hours , a daily practice for the solitary practitioner

Keeping Shore , what to do when things go wrong (in process)

The Landlocked Tide Witch , adapting the tradition for those far from the sea

The Manual of Ritual Materials , logistics, sourcing and substitutions (in process)

The Field Guide to Chinese Spirits and Folk Cosmology , a relational guide to the presences in the Tide Witch's world (in process)

The Pronunciation Companion , a guide to the Chinese terms used throughout the tradition (in process)

These texts are offered freely. They are not obligations. They are invitations.

A Note on the Tradition's Roots

The Tide Witch tradition draws on Chinese maritime folk religion, Daoist ritual practice and the specific coastal culture of Fujian province, home to Mazu, the Dragon Kings and a long history of women who practiced at the edge of the sea. The tradition honors these roots. It does not claim to be a reconstruction or a direct lineage. It is a living practice, shaped by attention and respect.

If you are a practitioner of a living Chinese tradition, you will recognize echoes of your own practice here. If you are new to these waters, you are welcome. The tradition does not require you to be anything other than what you are.

Why These Texts Are Free

These texts are offered without charge because the tradition believes that spiritual practice should not be gated by wealth. The sea does not charge admission. Neither should the words that teach us to read it.

If you find these texts useful, pass them on. Build a fire on the shore. Let your light be seen. The sea does not keep a ledger of your absences. Neither should we.

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INTRODUCTION: CARRYING THE SEA INLAND

You live far from the sea.

Perhaps you live in a city, surrounded by concrete and traffic, where the nearest salt water is a thousand miles away. Perhaps you live in the mountains, where the air is thin and the water is snowmelt, fresh and cold. Perhaps you live on the plains, where the horizon is unbroken by any shore, or in the desert, where water itself is a precious scarcity.

And yet you have found your way to the *Salt Archive*. You have read *the Chao Wu Lu* and felt something stir in you, a longing, a recognition, a sense of homecoming to a place you have never been. You want to practice. You want to learn to read the waves. You want to light a candle at dusk and pour a bowl of salt water at dawn. You want to speak the oath of the Tide Surge and mean it.

But how? The rituals assume you can go to the shore. *The Book of Hours* assumes you can stand barefoot at the tide line and watch the waves for a hundred breaths. *The Chao Wu Lu* speaks of gathering ocean water at the full moon, of casting offerings into the sea, of walking backward out of the surf. How can you do any of this when the sea is a thousand miles away?

This book is for you.

It will teach you that the sea is not only a place. It is a presence. It is inside you. The salt is in your blood. The tide is in your breath. The Ocean of Qi, *the lower dantian*, three finger-widths below your navel, is your inner sea and it can be felt, cultivated and consulted no matter where you live.

It will teach you practical adaptations for every major ritual in the *Salt Archive*, using bowls of salt water, windowsill altars, rivers and lakes, rain and the tidal imagination.

It will teach you that being landlocked is not a spiritual disability. It is a different kind of practice, a practice of longing, of memory, of carrying the sea inland. The Tide Witch who lives far from the shore is not less than the one who lives beside it. She is simply practicing a different form of attention.

And it will remind you, gently and repeatedly, that you are not doing it wrong. The sea does not require your physical presence. It requires your attention. Your body is made of salt water. You are already of the sea. The rest is just practice.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE INNER SEA, YOUR BODY AS SHORELINE

Before you learn to adapt the rituals, you must learn the most important adaptation of all: the sea is already inside you.

The Ocean of Qi

The Chao Wu Lu and *the Salt-Water Yi* both teach that *the lower dantian*, the Sea of Qi, located about three finger-widths below the navel, is the practitioner's inner ocean. It is the reservoir of vital energy, the place where the tides of the body can be felt.

To cultivate the Ocean of Qi:

1.Sit or lie down in a quiet place. Close your eyes.

2.Bring your attention to the lower abdomen. Do not visualize anything yet. Simply feel. Is there warmth? Coolness? Fullness? Emptiness? Movement? Stillness?

3.Begin to breathe into this point. Do not force the breath. Let it fall, *"like a stone dropping through still water. It knows where the bottom is."*

4.As you breathe, begin to imagine the Ocean of Qi as an actual sea. It may be calm or stormy, shallow or deep, clear or murky. Do not judge what you find. Simply observe.

5.Over time, you will learn the tides of your own inner sea. When is it full? When is it at ebb? What disturbs it? What calms it?

This practice requires no physical ocean. It can be done anywhere, in a city apartment, in a mountain cabin, in a desert tent. The inner sea is always with you.

The Body as Shore

The Weak Water Meditation, the foundational contemplative practice of the tradition, does not require you to be at the physical shore. It requires you to become the shore.

To practice *the Weak Water Meditation* while landlocked:

1.Sit quietly. Bring your attention to your Ocean of Qi.

2.Bring to mind a thing that disturbs you, a fear, a grief, a circumstance.

3.Picture this disturbance as a wave. Let it approach.

4.Do not push back. Do not flee. Do not argue. Simply be the shore.

5.The wave arrives. It breaks. It recedes. You remain.

Your body is the shore. The wave breaks against you and means nothing. This is the core teaching of Xiwangmu and it is available to you wherever you are.

The Salt in Your Blood

You are made of salt water. Your blood, your tears, your sweat, all of it carries the memory of the sea from which all life came. When you cannot go to the ocean, you can still taste your own salt. You can still feel the tide in your pulse. You can still know, in your body, that you are of the sea.

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CHAPTER TWO: THE BOWL ON THE WINDOWSILL, YOUR PORTABLE SEA

The most important adaptation for the landlocked practitioner is simple: a bowl of salt water.

Preparing Your Bowl

Choose a bowl of glass, ceramic, or wood, never metal, which *"quarrels with the lunar charge."* Fill it with water. Add salt. Natural sea salt is best, but any unrefined salt will do.

This bowl is not the ocean. But it is a window onto the ocean. It is a microcosm. When you gaze into it, you are gazing at the sea in miniature. When you speak to it, you are speaking to the sea by proxy.

Place the bowl on a windowsill, if possible, especially one that faces east, so that the morning light can touch it. If you have no windowsill, place it on your altar, or on a table that gets some natural light.

Change the water regularly. The sea is not stagnant. Your bowl should not be either. Once a week, pour the old water onto the earth where the salt won't hurt anything. Rinse the bowl. Refill it with fresh water and fresh salt.

Adapting the Daily Hours

Dawn: Instead of standing at the tide line, sit before your bowl. Gaze into the water. Watch the way the light moves across its surface. This is your *Lang Zhan*, your wave observation, adapted for the landlocked. After a hundred breaths, close your eyes. The first thing you recall is the primary answer.

Noon: If possible, place your bowl in direct sunlight. Let the noon light strike the water. This is your *Crimson Junk*, your moment of clarity at the height of the day.

Dusk: Light a candle beside your bowl. Pour a pinch of salt into the water and watch it dissolve. Speak your gratitude. This is your *Tide-Walker's Tread*.

Midnight: If you wake, sit before your bowl in the dark. Let the water be a dark mirror. This is your *Abyssal Trench*.

The Bowl as Teacher

The bowl is not a substitute. It is a teacher.

It teaches you to see the sea in small things. It teaches you to be present with what you have. It teaches you that the sea is not a place you go to, it is a presence you cultivate.

When you gaze into the bowl, you are not pretending. You are learning to see. The sea is vast. The bowl is small. But the attention you bring to the bowl is the same attention that you would bring to the shore.

The bowl does not replace the ocean. It reveals it.

It reveals that the sea is not a matter of size. It is a matter of attention. The bowl holds water, salt and memory. It holds the light of the moon and the reflection of the sun. It holds your intention, your longing, your presence.

The bowl is a mirror. It shows you what you bring to it. If you bring impatience, you will see impatience. If you bring stillness, you will see stillness. If you bring love, you will see love.

The bowl is a threshold. It is the place where the land meets the sea, where the ordinary meets the sacred, where your practice meets the tradition.

Tend your bowl. Change its water. Speak to it. Let it become part of your daily rhythm. Over time, it will cease to be a bowl of water. It will become a window onto the sea.

The sea knows your bowl. It recognizes the salt you have gathered. It knows your attention. And it will meet you there, in that small vessel, on that windowsill, in that quiet room.

The bowl is not a substitute. It is a teacher. And it is patient. It will wait for you to learn.

The Bowl as Offering Place

When a ritual calls for you to cast an offering into the sea, you may place it in or beside the bowl instead. The offering is received. The sea knows.

When a ritual calls for you to pour water onto the earth, pour it from the bowl. The water carries your intention.

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CHAPTER THREE: RIVERS, LAKES and RAIN, FRESHWATER ADAPTATIONS

You may not have the ocean, but you may have other waters. Rivers. Lakes. Streams. Rain. These are not the sea, but they are kin to the sea. They can be worked with.

Rivers

A river is a living current. It flows. It has its own spirit, its own Qi. If you live near a river, you can adapt many of the tradition's practices to its banks.

Stand at the river's edge as you would stand at the tide line. Watch the current as you would watch the waves. Gather river water as you would gather ocean water. It carries the Qi of the land it has traveled through. Speak to the river. Offer it salt. It will remember.

Lakes

A lake is a still sea. It does not have tides, but it has depths. It has seasons of warmth and cold, of clarity and murk. If you live near a lake, it can be your sea.

The lake's surface can be read like the sea's surface. Patterns of wind, light and ripple are its *Lang Zhan*. Full Moon Water can be gathered from a lake. It will not carry the salt memory of the ocean, but it will carry the lunar charge.

Depth Water can be gathered from a lake, if you have the means to do so safely.

Rain

Rain is the sky's gift to the land. It is fresh, not salt, but it is alive. *The Chao Wu Lu* recognizes Storm Water, gathered during a storm, from rain falling directly into the sea, as volatile, powerful and used for sudden change.

You can gather rain even if you are far from the sea. Rainwater carries the Qi of the storm. It is not Storm Water in the strict sense, it has not fallen into the sea, but it can be used for workings that require the energy of sudden change, disruption, or release.

Adapting Ocean Water Rituals

When a ritual calls for Full Moon Water and you cannot gather it from the sea:

1.Prepare a bowl of salt water.

2.On the night of the full moon, place the bowl where the moonlight can touch it, on a windowsill, on a balcony, in a garden.

3.Speak the Gathering Protocol: *"I gather you at your fullest, When the moon has filled you with her silver, When the tide has risen to its highest reach, When the sea is most herself."*

4.The water in the bowl is now charged with the lunar Qi. It is not the same as Full Moon Water gathered from the living sea, but it is sufficient for most workings.

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CHAPTER FOUR: THE TIDAL IMAGINATION

You cannot feel the physical tide if you live far from the sea. But you can learn the tide's rhythm. You can internalize it. This is the work of the tidal imagination.

Learning the Tides

Even if you are landlocked, you can learn the tides of the nearest coast. Tide tables are available online for every coastline in the world. Choose a coast, the one nearest you, or the one you feel most connected to and begin to track its tides.

Note when the tide is high. Note when it is low. Note when it is turning. Over time, you will begin to feel the rhythm in your body. You will know, without looking at a chart, that the tide is rising or falling.

Adapting Ritual Timing

Once you know the tides of your chosen coast, you can adapt the tradition's timing accordingly. When a ritual calls for the turning of the tide, you can perform it at the moment when your coast's tide is turning, even if you are a thousand miles away. The resonance is real. The tide does not require your physical presence.

Lunar Observation

The moon is visible everywhere. Its phases are the same whether you are on the shore or in the mountains. *The Book of Hours* provides lunar variations for the Daily Office. These require no adaptation. The dark moon is the dark moon, wherever you are.

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CHAPTER FIVE: URBAN PRACTICE, THE TIDE WITCH IN THE CITY

The city presents its own challenges and its own opportunities.

Finding the Wild Water

Even in the most built-up city, there is water. Fountains. Canals. Urban rivers. Puddles after rain. The runoff from a gutter. These are not the sea, but they are water. They carry Qi. They can be acknowledged, honored and worked with.

When you pass a fountain, pause. Touch the water if you can. Acknowledge its presence. It is kin to the sea.

The Windowsill Altar

If you have limited space, your altar may be a single shelf, a corner of a desk, a windowsill. This is enough. The basic altar requires only a bowl of water, a candle and

a dish of salt. These three things are the sea, the light and the memory. Everything else is elaboration.

Noise and Stillness

The city is loud. Finding stillness can be difficult. But the tradition does not require absolute silence. It requires the cultivation of an inner stillness that can coexist with outer noise.

The Weak Water Meditation can be practiced on a bus, on a subway, in a crowded room. The wave arrives. It breaks. It recedes. You remain. The noise of the city is just another wave.

Community

The city offers something the isolated shore does not: the possibility of community. If you are a solitary practitioner, you may find others in the city who share your longings. You may find a coven, a meditation group, or simply a friend who is willing to light a candle with you at dusk. *The Shore-Fire Covenant*, the deliberate act of signaling your light to others, is easier to fulfill in a city than in the wilderness.

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CHAPTER SIX: PILGRIMAGE, GOING TO THE SEA

Sooner or later, if you are able, you should go to the sea.

This is not a requirement. The sea does not demand your physical presence. But there is a quality of encounter that cannot be replicated by a bowl on a windowsill. The smell of salt. The sound of waves. The feeling of wet sand under your feet. The vast, unbroken horizon. These things matter.

Preparing for Pilgrimage

If you are planning a journey to the sea, prepare for it as a ritual event, not a vacation.

Before you go: Determine what you want from the encounter. A blessing? A baptism? An offering? A farewell? A petition? Let the purpose shape the journey.

What to bring: Your bowl. Your salt. Your Kinship Token, if you have one. A candle. A small offering. Your Wave Journal.

What to leave behind: Expectations. The sea will give you what it gives you. It may not be what you wanted.

When You Arrive

Do not rush into the water. Sit on the shore for a time. Let the sea see you. Let your body adjust to the salt air, the sound, the light.

When you are ready, stand barefoot at the tide line. Speak your name. Tell the sea why you have come. Perform the ritual you came to perform.

Bringing the Sea Home

Before you leave, gather water. Full Moon Water, if the timing is right. Dawn Water. Or simply water from the living sea. This water will be your portable ocean for the months or years until you can return.

Also gather a physical memento: a stone, a shell, a piece of driftwood, a vial of sand. Something you can touch when you need to remember.

After You Return

The first days after returning from the sea can be difficult. The land may feel flat, stale, silent. This is normal. You are not doing anything wrong. You are adjusting.

Tend your bowl. Light your candle. Let the memory of the sea sustain you. The sea is still there. You carry it now.

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CHAPTER SEVEN: THE LANDLOCKED OFFICES, ADAPTED RITUALS

This chapter provides adapted versions of the key rituals for the landlocked practitioner.

The Rite of the Salt-Kin Spirit (Adapted)

If you cannot go to the sea, perform the Rite before your bowl of salt water.

Place the bowl on the floor or on a low table. Kneel before it. Hold your Kinship Token in your left hand, your salt in your right.

Speak the Naming of the Kin. Speak your name to the bowl. Speak the names of your matrilineal ancestors.

Cast the salt into the bowl. As it dissolves, speak: *"Salt of my body, memory of the sea, I return a part of myself to the source."*

Hold the Token to your heart. Speak the Call to the Salt-Kin, addressing the bowl as you would address the sea: *"O, Sister of the Deep, Manifest Ancestor, Salt-Kin Spirit, I call to you across the threshold of my world and yours."*

Sit in stillness. Wait.

The Tide Surge (Adapted)

If you cannot wade into the sea, you may still speak the oath of the Tide Surge.

Fill a bathtub with salt water, or stand before your bowl. If using a bathtub, submerge yourself. If using a bowl, place your hands in the water.

Speak the oath. Speak it aloud, with your full voice: *"I am the tide coming in. I am the tide going out. I am the inheritor of the Tide Witches."*

When you are finished, let the water dry on your skin. The salt that remains is the sea's acknowledgment.

The Descent to the Salt-Kin (Adapted)

The Descent is a dream incubation ritual. It requires a bowl of New Moon Water, a mirror and darkness. None of these require the physical sea.

Prepare your sleeping space as described in *the Salt-Kin Codex*. Place the bowl of salt water on your bedside table. Angle the mirror so it reflects the empty dark above you. Speak the invocation. Enter the dream.

The Salt-Kin will find you. The dream-sea is not bound by geography.

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THE ETHICS OF LONGING

Longing is not a weakness. It is a form of attention. But it must be tended carefully.

Do not let longing become a prison. Do not let it convince you that you are incomplete. Do not let it turn the sea into a destination you will never reach.

The sea is not a place you go to. It is a presence you carry. The bowl is not a substitute. It is a practice. The river is not a compromise. It is a conversation. The rain is not a consolation. It is a gift.

Longing is the shape of your attention. It is not a lack. It is a form of love.

The landlocked practitioner carries a different kind of practice, one shaped by absence, by memory, by the desire for a place they cannot reach. This is not a lesser practice. It is a practice of attention to what is present, even in the face of absence.

When you tend your bowl, you are not waiting. You are practicing. When you light your candle, you are not hoping. You are being present. When you speak to the water, you are not pretending. You are speaking to the sea.

Longing becomes a wound when it fixes on what is missing. It becomes a practice when it rests in what is present.

So tend your longing. Let it be the shape of your attention. Let it be the salt in your water. Let it be the light in your candle.

Do not try to stop longing. You cannot. Longing is the shape of your love for the sea.

Instead, let longing teach you. Let it teach you to be present with what you have. Let it teach you to see the sea in small things. Let it teach you that the sea is not a place you go to. It is a presence you carry.

The sea does not require your physical presence. It requires your attention. And your attention, shaped by longing, is no less powerful than the attention of the one who stands at the tide line.

Longing is not a weakness. It is a form of love. And love, even when it is far from its object, is love is love is love.

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CONCLUSION: THE SEA REMEMBERS YOU

You are not less of a Tide Witch because you live far from the shore. You are a Tide Witch of a different kind, a practitioner of the inner tide, the bowl on the windowsill, the riverbank, the rain. Your practice is shaped by longing and longing is not a weakness. It is a form of attention.

The sea does not forget you. The salt is in your blood. The tide is in your breath. When you finally go to the shore and you will, someday, the sea will recognize you. It has been waiting.

Until then, tend your bowl. Light your candle. Speak your name to the water. The sea is the final witness. The register has no end.

The tide is turning. The hour is now. The rest is salt.

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